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CHRIST,

THE HARMONY OF THE DOCTRINES

TUTTLE

AND THE

UNITY OF THE RACE.

BACCALAUREATE SERMONS

DELIVERED AT

MIDDLEBURY COLLEGE,

BY

CALVIN B. HULBERT, D. D.,

President.

NEW YORK:
COLLINS & BROTHER, STATIONERS, 414 BROADWAY.
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C. B. HULBERT.

Middlebury College, Vt.,
February 22, 1879.

CHRIST,

THE HARMONY OF THE DOCTRINES.

SERMON

Delivered June 24, 1877.

"Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again."—Rom. viii. 34.

"Seeing, then, that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech."—II. Cor. iii. 12.

Let it be supposed that on a certain Sabbath morning I repair, in company with others, to the sanctuary, and there, in the order of the service, listen to a sermon on the subject of *Sin: its Nature, Extent and Guilt.* The preacher speaks in a tone of great solemnity, as if borne down with a sense of the intrinsic seriousness of the theme which he has in hand and the magnitude of the issues which are involved. His positions are taken with care, are clearly presented, and abundantly sustained by appeal to Biblical authority.

Relieving his subject of mere abstractions, he presents it as far as possible in the concrete and in a pungent application of it to his audience. In doing this, let it be supposed that he seems to single *me* out from all his other hearers, and to have in all he says a very distinct reference to *my* misdeeds and sins. He awakens in me the conviction that I am a sinner; by nature and by practice a sinner; and a sinner of aggravated, criminal guilt. The question now arises, What shall be my attitude of mind toward the doctrine presented? What shall my conscience say in response to the preacher's appeals? and what shall be my feelings toward the preacher himself? Shall bow in penitential grief and give utterance to my sense of guilt in

the spirit of the Fifty-first Psalm? or shall I manifest displeasure and indignantly repel the doctrine unfolded, and affirm that, so far as I am concerned, it is altogether misapplied?

Not so. Neither of these last attitudes will I assume. I am not altogether uninstructed by my own convictions. I am conscious of an arrangement made in my moral constitution for just this form of truth. I will, therefore, take leave of the sanctuary with this intent, to return and hear further. It is possible that the preacher has another sermon to preach ; and though upon a logically related, yet upon a different theme. I will hold my judgment in suspense till I have heard him in a second discourse.

Suppose that on the succeeding Sabbath I carry out my purpose and attend public worship in the same sanctuary, and on this occasion listen to a sermon by the same preacher. His subject is *Moral Inability*. He shows with great clearness and with abundant proof from Scripture that the sinner, in his apostasy, has no power of self-recovery; no reserved and latent forces within him, which, energizing, can enable him to deliver himself from his state of guilt and restore him to his normal integrity and purity. The preacher affirms the existence in nature of a known law whereby living things develop themselves spontaneously according to a principle inlaid in their constitutions, while no law is known to exist whereby one nature can contravene itself and develop its opposite without the intervention of a creative act of God. The analogy holds, he says, in regard to the sinner. He can develop, without help, the law of sin and death within him ; but he cannot go back of that law and insert a new base and evolve a nature therefrom at variance with it. In illustration of the sinner's state, the preacher points to a tree, dead and in the process of decay, and says, that as that tree has no recuperative power whereby it can restore its life, re-invest itself in a fresh bark and stand forth again crowned in the glory of its summer foliage, so the sinner, dead in trespasses and sins, has no self-restoring power. If saved, he must be saved by a power that regenerates in distinction from one that merely expands ; a power that grounds his life in a new spiritual base, rather than develops it from an illegiti-

mate and false one, violently inlaid in his apostate nature by his own free act.

He insists that

> "The transformation of apostate man
> From fool to wise, from earthly to divine,
> Is work for Him that made him."

Such now is the preacher's position in his doctrine, and a position which he maintains with an obviously intense conviction of its truth. As on the previous Sabbath when I listened to him, so on this, he advances beyond the mere development of his subject to make a most earnest and solemn application of it to his hearers, among whom I seem again to be singled out and specially addressed. The preacher seems intent upon driving me to the conviction that I am not only a sinner, and wholly a sinner, and a guilty sinner, but that, being such, I am disabled, morally incapacitated, incompetent to perform a holy act in my own strength. I had always acted on the maxim, that if I needed help, to help myself; but he tells me that I have reached an emergency where this maxim must be set aside. He assures me that I must have help which is not self-rendered. He rings changes upon that word of mysterious import—*lost;* and with such solemn earnestness as to give it an appalling significance. As he speaks, I feel that I am included in the number of those who have passed the limits of self-recovery, and that what I need is what may properly be denominated a *salvation* from a *lost condition.*

And now I repeat my previous inquiry and ask, What shall I do in view of this new truth urged upon my attention? Shall I mentally resist it? Shall I openly express my displeasure? Shall I say that the preacher puts the divine character in peril by supposing God to have created man with such a prerogative of free will as to render possible a lapse in such a lost condition? Shall I go away from this preacher irate and say that I will hear him no more? Nothing of all this can I do. I am a rational soul, and I cannot afford to repel the words of a man who makes his appeal to my reason, and obviously grounds his positions not only in the Bible, but in the nature of things. It is true that what he has taught is encumbered with

difficulties; but if I should hold no truths but those which are not, I should, in fact, have none at all, and be a man of mere negations. Moreover, while my understanding may have been not a little baffled in what the preacher has taught, still a certain rational intuition holds me to his positions as absolutely impregnable. I will go away, therefore, with this intention—to come and hear him again on the next Sabbath. I have heard him speak on two themes—he may have a third.

Imagine, now, that upon the ensuing Sabbath I take my place in the same worshipping assembly, and listen to another sermon from its pastor. The impressions of the previous Sabbaths are uneffaced by the labors of the week, and prepare me to listen with deeper interest than ever before. But conceive of my surprise as the preacher announces his theme: *The Reality and Power of Satanic Agency in the Earth.* The shock given me by this announcement, however, is soon abated by the calm and earnest manner of the speaker, who goes on to maintain that what the Bible teaches concerning those spiritual beings who kept not their first estate is taught in the interests of truth, and not, as some have strangely affirmed, in accommodation to our human weakness. He shows that next after One Other Personage, no being is more frequently brought into view in the Scriptures than Satan; and particularly in the New Testament, where we have the most advanced forms of inspired thought. He contends, with Archbishop Whately, that a style of exegesis which eliminates the person of such a fallen spirit from the Scriptures, by converting him into an oriental metaphor or into a grammatical idiom, or by making him simply an impersonation of evil, is a style of biblical interpretation which is likely, in its conceit, to advance till it precipitates the whole body of the Scriptures into offensive rubbish. He takes the ground that the Bible teaches by direct assertion and by implication that there exists a kingdom of fallen spirits circumambient to the earth and coming continually into immediate and influential contact with human minds. He suggests whether the hypothesis of the existence of such a superhuman

agency of evil is not required to account for the strange forms of human wickedness that abound in the earth.

Let it be supposed, as heretofore, that in dealing with this subject—a subject from which every mind instinctively revolts—the preacher does it in the style of solemn earnestness which a personal belief enforces, and in a way to awaken in me a sense of alarm at the thought of my own exposure to the wiles of the Arch-Enemy. Ill at ease when I came to church, with the conviction that I was a sinner, and a lost sinner, I find no relief now in the added position that I am a sinner assaulted and enthralled by alien spirits.

At this advance upon previous disclosures of truth, the old question returns: How shall I stand affected toward this strange doctrine that has come to my ears? How shall I feel toward the preacher? Shall I assume an attitude of bristling hostility? Shall I charge him with an unpardonable loitering behind the culture of the age? or shall I assail him for vindicating the hideous dogmas of a pagan theology? or shall I pour upon him the contempt due to the craven spirit who adheres to error because it is old, since he lacks the courage to accept truth because it is new? No; nothing of this. I *will* retain an equanimity and candor the full match of the speaker's. I will say that there is nothing intrinsically unreasonable in the existence of other worlds than our own, and of other systems of moral beings; such beings must be free moral agents, and be endowed with the possibility to sin; this possibility may have been realized when they kept not their first estate. That God should permit them to influence human minds is a mystery; but a mystery in kind with the permission He accords to the seducer when he eyes the flower he would spoil. There is also a logical sequence and harmony in what the preacher has taught in his three discourses concerning my sin and my inability, and now in my exposure to the guileful influences of evil spirits. Retaining a docile mind and accounting *him* as controlled by the cowardly spirit, who shuns to declare or to receive all the counsel of God, I will retire from the sanctuary, as on previous occasions, with the purpose to return again. I have heard, from the same pulpit, three discourses

upon three different themes. It may be that on the next Sabbath I shall hear another fresh subject discussed. It is possible that no preacher, in three sermons, can exhaust the system of biblical truth.

On the following Sabbath morning, let it be supposed, that I fulfil this purpose and join the same congregation. The pastor is in the pulpit. His bearing on this occasion, as heretofore, is dignified and impressive ; his face is full of solemnity and benignity, and beams with the emotions of a warm heart. His style of utterance is that of a man who believes, and therefore speaks, and who cannot but speak forth the words of truth and soberness which he has heard ; for his words are not so much those which man's wisdom teacheth as those which the Holy Ghost teacheth. He speaks like a man commissioned from the court of Heaven to deliver divine messages. He is utterly unmoved by that patent cry of atheistic unbelief which assails the ears of modern preachers as it did those of the ancient prophets : "Prophesy not unto us right things ; speak unto us smooth things ; prophesy deceits ; *cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us.*"

From previous experiences under this preacher's ministrations, I need not be surprised to find that his words continue to be "as goads and as nails fastened by the masters of assemblies." Hence his theme on this occasion strikes me as in logical harmony with preceding ones, when he proposes to consider the doctrine of *Future Punishment.*

"Alas !"—this is my soliloquy—"I am not only a sinner, a sinner by nature and by practice and a criminally guilty sinner ; I am not only a disabled sinner, and, apart from divine intervention, a hopelessly lost sinner ; I am not only a beleaguered sinner, called to war both against flesh and blood and against principalities and powers ; but also and beyond all this, I now find that I am—and in natural sequence—an exposed sinner, and, in the destiny of the soul, to a catastrophe whose bounds the imagination cannot compass." To establish the truth of this, the preacher, in his sermon, advances to affirm it on the authority of inspired and unambiguous assertion, on

the one hand, and the nature of apostate mind on the other. He says that there are arrangements made, not only in the divine moral government of the world, but in the nature and constitution of the human soul, whereby sinners dying unrepentant and the enemies of God, merit and will receive an everlasting overthrow. He reasons that as God's character remains unimpaired in the presence of the fact, patent before every eye, that sin and misery are conjoined in this life, so his character will need suffer no loss, but remain infinitely amiable in case sin and misery are conjoined in human experience in the next. He insists that the fact that "God is love" is more easily reconciled with the continuance of sin, in impenitent minds, in eternity, than it is with the beginning of sin, in holy minds, in time. Whatever arguments can harmonize the divine benevolence with the origin of evil are equally valid in reconciling the divine benevolence with the continuance of evil in apostate mind. Thus does the preacher argue. Nor does he speak with a hesitating and faltering confidence. His utterances are not yea and nay, but yea and amen. He gives no uncertain sound. He uses great plainness of speech. As God's ambassador he asserts, on God's authority, certain primary and essential facts, giving them unqualified and unmistakable prominence. He asserts; he reasons; he announces; he proclaims; knowing the terrors of the Lord, he persuades. And in dealing with this theme of appalling interest, let us suppose that he gives it a practical bearing, and in a way to disturb and alarm impenitent hearers; and, being myself of this number, let it be supposed that I feel myself to be hard pressed, and not a little alarmed and moved by the urgency of his appeals. His "great plainness of speech" pricks me to the heart. As I listen to his terrific delineations of the day of judgment and the retributions of eternity, I am filled with a "fear that hath torment."

Here again, and for the fourth time, I am driven back upon the old question: What shall I do? Confronted with this doctrine of the destiny of the incorrigible, what shall I say? As I hear the preacher, shall I brace my feet in the slip in tort and angry opposition to his words? Shall I look around in a choleric spirit to find

in other hearers expressions of sympathy with me in my enmity? Shall I wrap about me the scaly folds of a sullen unbelief and bid defiance? Shall I charge the preacher with cruel-heartedness, and curl upon him a lip of contempt, and smite him in the face and say that he imputes to the heart of the Infinite Father the intrinsic quality of a fiend?

Not I. There is too much of reason and soberness in the preacher; he speaks too much as one that has authority from above; he hangs his utterances too much upon hooks which protrude from my own soul; he incorporates too much of that law which is written in my heart, whereby my conscience bears witness in thoughts that accuse or else excuse. I am too wonderfully and fearfully made, having a large discourse of reason that looks before and after; and I know not enough of the psychology of guilt, the necessities of finite mind—its possibilities in sin—and what the nature of that death is in which sin issues when it is finished—in all these particulars I am too uninformed and short-sighted to take any stand against the preacher and against his doctrine. It is true that in his discourses hitherto he has made havoc of the hopes which I had entertained of my good estate and my prospects for the world to come. I confess that he has hedged up my way and put darkness in my path. A succession of ponderous truths, logically related, interlinked, and sombre and gloomy, bar my advance and I cannot gainsay them; nor do I dare oppose the preacher, lest, haply, I be found to fight against God.

But this have I found—and it is my great relief—*this preacher is the preacher of many themes*, and it may be that he can preach another sermon, and on another theme; and of this one thing I am confident, that in all he may say hereafter, he can possibly preach upon no subjects of more terrific interest than those already presented. He has told me that I am a sinner, and a guilty sinner, and *I know that I am;* he has taught me that I am a sinner disabled and helpless; and my *consciousness has confirmed all he has said;* he has assured me that I am assailed and beleaguered by apostate spirits in malignant pursuit of me, and upon an authority that *forbids a ques-*

tion; and he has reasoned with me out of the Scriptures and out of the contents of my own soul, of righteousness, and temperance, and judgment to come, till *I have trembled in view of the possible issues of the law of sin and death within me;* and I do not believe that it is in the power of the preacher to drive me to a more fearful extremity than the one I am in, and where I am "shut up," and where my "mouth is stopped." I will, therefore, withdraw from the sanctuary, controlled by the same purpose as heretofore — to come to listen to what he may next have to say. I would that my extremity might be made by him an opportunity of speaking of some shadow of a great rock in a weary land; of some daysman, some mediator, some deliverer of captives and opener of prison doors to them that are bound; but I will hold myself in readiness to receive whatever he shall teach, if he retains his spirit of candor and style of tender appeal.

There is often a crisis in the history of a human soul. It occurs whenever eternal realities are made to dawn upon the convicted and baffled spirit. It is then that a conflict of rival interests puts the probationer in great temptation to heed the "many devices in a man's *heart*" as opposed to "the counsel of the Lord, which shall stand," and which speaks with such tones of authority in man's *reason and conscience*, as well as in the Scriptures. A series of such crises we have noticed in the experience which we have been following, and in each of which a happy transition has been made; a docile and inquiring spirit has been wisely retained.

Let it be supposed that with such a temper of mind, I resort on the fifth Sabbath to the sanctuary to take what is becoming my accustomed place in the congregation. As I approach the sanctuary a certain sense of dread steals upon me. According to that law of mental action, whereby we produce from objects that which we have embodied in them by association, the church edifice itself, to my vision, is invested with almost a prison gloom. The service conducted in it heretofore, in my experience, has been simply "*a ministration of death.*" If for four times I have entered it alive, I have yet as many times withdrawn from it slain. I have found in it

nothing but a knowledge of sin and other painfully related truths. The preacher himself, though seemingly a warm-hearted and genial man, has yet lost something of his winning grace and attractiveness by my association of him with the uninviting and gloomy themes which I have heard him discuss. I might almost say at times that "I hate him, for he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil;" but my mouth is stopped because of certain "invisible things which are clearly seen in things that are made, and because my own thoughts the meanwhile accuse, or else excuse me." As he advances, however, on this occasion in the service, there is something in his bearing and spirit that rebukes my hostility and wins me to him. I am the more disarmed and subdued as he announces his theme: *Let us consider the fitness of God's love in Christ to win the hearts of men.* His text is this: "For God commendeth His love toward us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us"—a passage which the preacher proposes to use as representative of a large number of passages affirming the same truth. That there is this fitness in God's love to win the heart, is made to appear from the nature of love in general, as an amiable affection, but especially from the character of God's love as holy. He attaches, also, great importance to its exercise in God as a spontaneous affection, not required in order to the perfectness of His character, nor to an exhibition of it to the comprehension of His intelligent creatures, nor to the administration of His government, but as being *an uncompelled and free expression of His heart.* The great emphasis is laid, however, on the *intensity* of God's love *as involving self-denial*, and on the *strangeness* of it as exercised *toward the guilty.* As he speaks of the Father's self-denial in the mystery of His Son's incarnation, in His agony and bloody sweat, in His cross and passion, in His precious death and burial, and in the unnaturalness of suffering innocence, and especially under the divine inflictions; as he announces that Christ tasted death for every man and bore the iniquity of us all; that He is the propitiation, not only for our sins, but for the sins of the whole world, so that the most needless event that ever takes place in the history of the universe, is the loss of a human soul,—as he speaks of these things, and the

strangeness of them as favors shown to the guilty, there are disclosures made to me of God's love—"its breadth, and length, and depth, and height"—of which, previously, I had not the faintest apprehension. Heretofore as I listened to his ministrations, I regarded the preacher as determined not to know anything in the pulpit save me, and me a sinner, and a sinner disabled and enthralled, and exposed to a miserable destiny; but as I now hear him speak, he seems determined not to know anything in the pulpit save the love of God in "Christ and Him crucified." His range of thought is so broad, his vision is so clear, his emotion is so deep; he has taken such a hold upon the Seven Pillars which Wisdom hath hewn out, he has caught such an inspiration from the Scourged of Pilate's hall; he is so insphered in the loving mind of the Infinite Father, that he speaks with more than the tongues of men or of angels. True to his previous style, he shows that he is not controlled by a speculative interest, nor by any of the motives of the secular orator. His eloquence, like the New Jerusalem, comes down from God out of heaven. It is that of a redeemed sinner supernaturally stirred by His sympathies for men who need redemption. Hence the urgency and force of his appeals. He tells his hearers that their necessity is so great, their unworthiness is so deep, and their salvation is so costly, that, *on any terms possible with God*, they should account salvation a privilege; much more, then, should they so account it when its terms are those which are prescribed—repentance and faith—and which are reasonable terms, and just, and practicable and necessary. That he may mount to the height of this great argument of salvation found in, and enforced by, the love of God, he directs my attention to the fact, that the Crucified whom he preaches is the Being of Many Names, and that all these names are significant names—corresponding opposites to necessities in the sinner, each to each. He proposes to me, Are you in Sin? But Christ is the Lamb of God that taketh away your sin. Are you disabled? When you were without strength, in due time Christ died for you. Are you enthralled by alien spirits? Christ hath provided a way of deliverance out of the Kingdom of Satan into the Kingdom of God's dear Son.

Are you in darkness? Christ is your light. Are you like the troubled sea when it cannot rest? Christ is your peace. Are you a stumbler on the dark mountains, or are you in a conflict of rival opinions, or are you dead in trespasses and sins? Christ is for you the Way, and the Truth, and the Life. In short, are you in peril number one, or two, or three, or four, and so on, endlessly? Let me assure you that there are for you in Christ corresponding forms of deliverance, and numerically an exact match for your perils, each to each.

Thus the preacher insists that there are no emergencies in the sinner's state that find not corresponding alleviations in the superabundant grace of God in Jesus Christ; that, however the sinner may be beset behind and before; however high his guilt may rise or his offence be rank, his loss in hell, though surely impending, as he is, is yet, with such a ransom found, the most needless of all needless things.

Here, once more, arises the ever-recurring question, as I listen to the ministrations of this pulpit: What shall I do? What response shall I make to this strange variation of, as well as advance upon, previous discourses? I am called to prompt and decisive action—what shall that action be? Good news of great joy has come to me. I had heard about myself, my sin and peril; I am glad to hear of God, and of His love in Christ. Great is the mystery of godliness; God manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world and received up into glory; and to me is the word of this salvation sent. Say, then? This will I say, that in view of this strange manifestation of God's mind toward me, I am delivered wholly and forever *from all temptation to complain of the severity of this preacher.*

I was once disposed to do it; I accounted him cruel; I almost hated him, and was on the point once of abandoning his ministrations, determined that I would hear him no more. But I now find that I was wise, beyond a knowledge of my wisdom, in holding my judgment in suspense as I first listened to his preaching. The light which pours in upon me in this fifth sermon relieves me from all the terrors that had gathered upon me as I heard the first four. Shut

up solely to the contemplation of sin and the disability it creates ; of alien spirits and the destiny that awaits them and all who are one with them in heart, I am driven to despair ; but as I contemplate these same severe and sombre truths in the light cast upon them in the ameliorating and cheering doctrines of the cross, they lose their threatening aspect; if not their essential nature, they yet surrender their sting. The sanctuary in which, for four Sabbaths, "a ministration of death" was preached, and which to me then was draped in gloom, its very atmosphere pulsating with a funereal sadness, and which was, therefore, the very opposite of the gate to Heaven, has been transmuted, by the preaching of this fifth sermon, into a totally new structure. A "ministration of life" is now proclaimed in it, and it is flooded with a light from Heaven above the brightness of the sun. The preacher, too, who, in my associating him with uninviting and repulsive doctrines, was fast becoming an object of dread, by a readjustment of previous sermons upon a new base and around a new centre, and with a new outlook, is now a completely transfigured man. A minister of consternation once, he is now an ambassador for Christ. His gentleness and benignity, obscured by my misapprehension of his aims in the pulpit, now invest him in their beaming fulness ; and I say again that this preacher is the preacher of many themes, but of many themes as headed toward, and centring in, and clustering upon, One Theme. Thanks be unto God, he is not always telling me that I am a sinner; he does not confine my vision to the fact of my helplessness ; he permits me to turn my gaze from the Arch-Enemy and his angels, in leagued pursuit of me ; he does not hold me unalterably to a fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation. "Glory be unto the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost ; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end,' for the glorious Gospel of the blessed God. Do, then ? What shall I do ? I will take the cup of salvation which is offered me in these provisions of redemption. No longer ignorant of God's righteousness, I will no longer go about to establish a righteousness of my own, but submit to the one which has been established for me.

I do, therefore, now rest confidently in this crimson centre of the Christian system. I do repent and believe the Gospel. And, accepting the truths taught me from this source, I will no longer hold my judgment in suspense in respect to truths enforced in previous discourses. So long as this preacher will give me such hope as this furnished in the Gospel, I will give him the broadest liberty to use great plainness of speech. While he can offset a ministration of death by this ministration of life, he can give me no offence in the use of those scriptural terms and expressions, from which I once recoiled, and which continue to be so repulsive to many hearers.

He has solved the riddle of the honey in the lion's carcass. He has put a new song into my mouth, and in triumph I inquire, Who is he that condemneth? Not he who tells that I am a sinner, and a guilty and a lost sinner; not even though he push me to the extreme of acknowledging that I sinned in Adam and am physically depraved, for it is Christ that died, and in Him I am saved; not because I am not a sinner and the very chief of sinners, but because I am, and in spite of my being. I repeat: Who is he that condemneth? Not he who tells me that I am disabled and utterly helpless, not even if he drive me to the extreme of saying that my inability is natural and absolute; for it is Christ that died, and in Him I am safe, though weak—for I am not saved because I am not helpless and dependent, but because I am, and in spite of it. Who, then, is he that condemneth? Not he who tells me of the devil and his angels, and of their influence upon human minds; for it is Christ that died, and, dying, conquered man's great enemy, and in Him I have an impregnable fortress, and stand in no fear; for I am not saved because there is no empire of evil spirits, but because there is, and in spite of the appalling fact. Yet once more I hurl the challenge: Who is he that condemneth? Not he who assures me of the certainty of future endless conscious punishment, and in a world prepared for the devil and his angels, for it is Christ that died; yea, that is risen again, and in Him I am saved from the

destiny of the incorrigible, and am secure, not because there is no punishment of the kind, but because there is, and in spite of it.

Let it be supposed now, that, standing on this ground of an evangelical experience, I visit an orthodox sanctuary on the Sabbath and hear a sermon on Sin, or on Inability, or on Alien Spirits, or on Future Punishment, or on any related subject. I take no offence; I say to the preacher: "Preach on; preach with clearness all the counsel of God on these themes ; I am no longer sensitive to the severity of Biblical doctrine ; for my door of entrance into heaven is not in a denial, but in an acceptance of the so-called severe doctrines of Revelation ; not upon their overthrow and ruins, but upon their vindication, do I build my hope. There is a more excellent way to heaven than by battering them down; a better foundation laid than their demolition. So long as you tell me that it is Christ that died, and give me such hope as His death and resurrection justify, you may use and continue to use great plainness of speech. In all needful discussions of truth in the pulpit you may use the word "sin" and its synonyms; you may affirm of man in his apostasy, that he is without soundness, and that his moral character is little else than "bruises and putrefying sores;" on fitting occasion, and in elevated and solemn discourse, you need not recoil from that outspoken style that uses the words "devil," and "Satan," and the terms "evil spirits," "powers of darkness ;" nor need you hesitate and draw back when you come to the word "hell," or the terms "fire and brimstone," "wailing and gnashing of teeth," "eternal damnation," "unquenchable fire." Both the canon of good taste and the canon of Scripture authorize your use of them ; and I urge you to disclose not a spirit of timid evasion of these severe, but Biblical terms; for to me they have lost their terrors; not because they are found at length to be meaningless, but because they are overpowered by the superabounding meaning of certain other words in the evangelical system which stand over against them in assaulting contrast. So long as Christ wears His significant names ; so long as the words forgiveness, redemption, salvation, eternal life, have their fulness of meaning, I feel no impulse to withhold from the harsher Biblical terms their natural and

obvious significance. Christ came not to destroy, but to fulfil the import of these latter terms, by so giving to the world an advance of truth upon them that they can be accepted without fear.

I think I cannot be misunderstood. This is my meaning ; let any man accept the Gospel of Jesus Christ for what it is worth to him, and that means at God's valuation of it, and he can find no possible occasion to fear those doctrines of the evangelical system which are commonly so repulsive to the natural heart. The offence of the Cross is an offence taken at those doctrines that render it needful. Let these doctrines be received without offence, and the offence of the cross ceases. An accceptance of Him who felt "the sting of death, which is sin," extracts the sting from the severe doctrines. We are told that when Daniel was cast into the den, God sent His angel and shut the lions' mouths. It is not otherwise that God interposes to save the sinner when he repents and believes. To those doctrines, that awaken a fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, and that threaten *to devour* the ungodly man, God sends His angel on the instant that he believes, and shuts their mouths. Henceforth these doctrines move about him, or lie at his feet, as inoffensive and harmless as the lions did around the prophet in the den; and God's promise is that they shall not hurt or destroy in all His holy mountain.

The subject considered suggests, in closing, a few points of great practical moment :

I. We see that prominence must be given in the ministrations of the pulpit to the so-called severe doctrines of revelation. These are not the distinctive doctrines of the Bible, but they must be earnestly taught, to create a demand for those that are. The worth of the remedy is measured by the strength of the disease. The arms of the Saviour are inviting only to those who are consciously in the folds of the serpent. Sin and its logically related truths must be clearly and earnestly discussed in the pulpit before men will accept, with the required self-surrender and energy, the antidote provided for it. But,

II. While prominence is to be given to truths fitted to disturb the

guilty, and to lead them to fear the wrath to come, still they are to be presented, not for their own sakes, but as preliminaries to truths of a different type, to be immediately enforced. It is not sufficiently considered that a great proportion of the truths of the Bible have an existence independent of it. If we had no Bible, they would remain dominant forces in human experience. They are the truths of natural religion which Bishop Butler fell back upon and employed with such power in his immortal "Analogy;" truths which the Bible never teaches, because it always assumes that every man is bound to know them as taught by the natural reason. They are affirmed and reaffirmed everywhere in the Bible, but are not taught as its peculiar and distinctive truths. They are the natural substrate and background on which the genial and clement truths of the Gospel are exhibited and enforced. The truths to which I listened on the first four Sabbaths, as represented in the early part of this discourse, were distinctively the truths of natural religion, and, as for substance, might as well have been taught by Plato or Confucius, as by the evangelical divine. There are men who are offended at the Bible, and who are seeking to destroy its credibility. Suppose their end accomplished; they are not delivered from the truths taught in these first four sermons, truths which inhere in the nature of things, and which abide unalterably the same, even though the Bible be shown to be otherwise untrustworthy. The facts of sin and moral inability, of alien destructive influence and penal infliction, are affirmed in the book of nature, republished in the Bible. In getting rid of the Bible, therefore, they retain all its sombre and severe truths, while they surrender all its inviting and cheering ones. *They only do away with the fifth sermon.* The sanctuary may remain, but, if properly used, it is a ministration of death. Its gloomy walls can echo to the proclamation of the stern and relentless truths of nature, and that is all. "Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have, give I thee"—a knowledge of sin and its bondage, of destructive influence and impending doom. Its teachings would contain so little of the Gospel proper, that were they the whole of it, we should have absolutely no Gospel at all. At its best

estate, it would be the voice of one crying in the wilderness, a schoolmaster inflicting rigorous discipline. It could never engage in a ministration of life. It could never bring balm from Gilead, or tell of any physician there. It could only urge the bitten Israelite to inspect his inflamed wound, the leper to mark the progress of decay in his infected limb—*that is all.* Therefore,

III.* Our subject suggests a matter of critical interest to the pulpit in observing the importance of preserving symmetry of doctrine in preaching. The preacher is rightly to divide the Word, not only by giving to his hearers a portion of meat in due season, but also by calling their attention to the twofold origin of the Word he preaches, as coming from both natural and supernatural utterances in the Bible. He is to mark the fact that all the truths of natural religion not only reappear in the Bible, but are there so presented and emphasized as to be lifted to a lofty dignity and importance; meanwhile he is to notice that over against these, and as contradistinguished from them, tower, yet higher and more conspicuously, the supernatural truths of the Christian system—the Gospel proper, the glad tidings—and that these are to be the staple of his preaching. These he is to proclaim with such an intense appreciation of their worth, and with such consuming zeal, as to be himself known by the title they give him, and be called a preacher—not of sin, or inability, or satanic agency, or of Hell—but distinctively, *a preacher of the Gospel.* Not that these severe truths are not to be emphasized, but that they are not to come to the front and usurp dominion among the themes of the pulpit. The first place is to be given to Christ and Him crucified. When this is done the pulpit will accomplish all within its power to keep impenitent minds from yielding to a tendency so to exaggerate the severe doctrines as to keep out of view the attractive and saving ones. There are difficulties in the way of salvation, and they are connected mainly with the harsher aspects of Biblical truth. There is a strange tendency in unbelieving minds to say that the first four sermons to which I listened consti-

* This division, and some other parts of the discourse, were omitted in the delivery.

tute the staple of evangelical preaching. If, in listening to the fifth sermon, they do not accept it, then they require the ministration of death, set forth in the first four, to take permanent possession of the sanctuary. Thus what ought to be to them, by accepting another ministration, the very gate to Heaven, becomes practically, in their experience, the very gate to Hell. Their every thought of the sanctuary and of the service in it, and of Christian believers, is a thought of severe and gloomy truths. The result is, that persons of this class adopt one of several courses. Perhaps they abandon the sanctuary. Why should they reappear in it Sabbath after Sabbath to hear truths which they repel as cruel, because they refuse to accept truths that are sweet and winning? Who wants to be kept always in misery? On the other hand, perhaps they continue their attendance, but settle down into a state of sceptical indifference as to the truths presented. There is a comeliness in the service that appeals to their cultured taste, an intellectual elevation that satisfies the mind, a sympathy with good people that reacts favorably upon their own morals, and they continue to attend. Yet another class, possessed of a controversial spirit, will go to church to hear truth proclaimed in order to repel it because of the suspected illogical processes used in its defence. In sympathy with these classes, there may arise a goodly number of persons who, abandoning the sanctuary, where they say a pagan theology is taught, unite with them and form a society of their own, in whose house of worship the harsher doctrines are studiously excluded, while they are the only ones that can be logically taught therein.

Now the workman in the pulpit who needeth not to be ashamed, who rightly divides the Word, and is wise to win souls, will take note of this tendency of the human heart to misinterpret and pervert the more unwelcome doctrines of the Bible, and so present the same in connection with the warm and genial truths of the Gospel, as to enable the people to see that, having accepted the latter, they have nothing to fear from the former.

IV. We see the exceeding injustice of the charge, often hinted, and sometimes directly brought against the evangelical pulpit, that it

preaches a system of doctrine essentially inhumane, if not replete with the spirit of pagan cruelty. Nothing can be further from the fact. The Christian pulpit teaches this, "He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son, hath not life, but the wrath of God abideth on him," and this is good doctrine. It teaches that it is needless for men to be lost—that they have no right not to be saved —and this is not pagan barbarity. It teaches that God would have all men to be saved; that He is not willing that any should perish; that the exclamation of His heart is, How can I give thee up? and there is no cruelty in such expressions of God's love. Is the mother cruel in warning her child from the verge of a cataract? Neither is God, when, in the proclamation of severe truths in the pulpit, He would stay His children from dashing themselves in pieces upon the thick bosses of His bucklers. God grant that we may all so receive the whole counsel of God—truths of His Word of either sort—that we shall be able to exclaim with the Psalmist, "Great peace have they that keep Thy law, and NOTHING SHALL OFFEND THEM."

Christian friends, the occasion which convenes us to-day takes to itself an interest with which we have been made familiar. The close of another college year; the commencement of a new year; the departure from among us of a body of young men who for four years have been with us; the advance of classes to higher grades, and the incoming of a new class, are events that we recognize with an ever fresh interest. If it is sometimes charged against our college that she is not richly endowed—that she lacks in equipment—it may yet be affirmed in her favor, that she is fortunately intrenched in the bosom of a community who account her interests their own, and who are studious of her welfare. Far hence be the day when anything shall ever occur to create the slightest alienation and severance between relations that have been so happily allied, and for so many years.

But the peculiar interest of this occasion appertains to a portion of our number who have been wont to worship with us here and in other sanctuaries of the village, and who are soon to go forth to

be with us no more, save as we shall greet them hereafter as alumni as they return on commencement and other occasions.

Speaking on behalf of the college, let me extend to you, *gentlemen of the graduating class*, those forms of congratulation which are due to those who have prosecuted successfully their college course to its close. I need not remind you, gentlemen, of the significance of this event in your lives. A young man is always an object of interest. Large capabilities are lodged within him. Depths of dishonor are to be escaped; heights of glory to be attained. But pre-eminently true is this of a young man who has enjoyed the advantages of a collegiate and Christian education. We impose on him the obligations of a noble career and great usefulness. His training and culture; his accumulated knowledge; his growth towards a maturer and riper manhood, dispose us to lay on him the heavier burdens of responsibility, and require from him more ample returns. We are happy to express the confidence that this will be the service which you will render. Go forth from us fortified by Christian principles, under the inspirations of a resolute purpose to do good and to inherit whatever reward such a purpose will bring; hate sin and rebuke it; accept the truths of the Christian faith and practice her virtues ; and to each of you I add

"Be just and fear not.
Let all the ends thou aim'st at be thy country's,
Thy God's, and truth's."

"To thine own self be true.
And it must follow as night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man."

CHRIST,

THE UNITY OF THE RACE.

SERMON

Delivered June 30, 1878.

"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."—Matt. xi. 28.

I. *You have all observed in the study of history a tendency in human minds to yield to the attraction of certain centres of thought—to congregate and cluster upon certain leading or representative ideas.* This tendency is foreshadowed in the endless unities of material nature. Particles of matter cohere by the law of chemical affinity; the heavenly bodies are held to their respective centres by gravitation ; atoms adjust themselves in the plant or tree by an architectural instinct in the law of its life ; the material that enters into the animal organization obeys the same law of vivific growth. Rising higher, we see insects living in communities and moving in swarms ; fishes in shoals, birds in flocks and cattle in herds. But this law which obtains in all the departments of lower nature, animate and inanimate, enforcing organization and social harmony, reappears in a higher form and equally imperative in the realm of humanity, requiring men to live in society. Every plan of isolation here is abortive ; confronts a decree of God and a law of nature. Our solar system could as easily disband, or the coherence of the dew-drop or of the crystal cease, as human souls could abide apart from one another in social independence. But mankind have not only cohered at these centres, they have moved together from place to place, retaining their unity. As honey bees move in swarms and pigeons in flocks, so men have moved in masses. Such was the

migration of the Israelites from the house of bondage, the successive settlements along the Mediterranean and in Southern Europe, afterwards in the British Isles, and, in modern times, in our Western Hemisphere. By what potent and mysterious spring of action these migratory movements have been caused, it matters not. The *fact* of a common impulse in these earth-slides and avalanches of migration, without disturbing the old unities, is all that concerns us here. But this harmonious movement has not been wholly geographical. There have been social and moral elevations and lapses, where whole nations have been raised above themselves or have fallen to a lower level; but these advances or retrogressions have all taken place in harmony with law enforcing a general order. The world of mankind has been moving evermore, sometimes with slow and laggard pace, often with the force of a storm-driven sea, but always, though separated into clans and tribes and nations, in obedience to the law of unity that has kept these peoples together as respects place or grade of civilization.

But notice, that while the race has been characterized by this restless and feverish mobility, and has fallen into different and separate nationalities, bounded often and shut in by sea and mountain range, human minds meanwhile have congregated and fastened upon ideas at the great centres of historic thought which have been largely independent of time and place. These centres have been denominated schools—schools in philosophy, in ethics, in theology; schools in politics, in jurisprudence and administration; in literature, science, art and criticism. By the word schools, we mean "ways in which ideas pre-eminently manifest themselves as living powers in the practical life of mankind." They are the great leading forms in which human energy has been developing and expanding its forces along the lines of time.

But human minds have concentred often at points which can hardly be dignified by the word school, a word which, in its common acceptation, carries in it a certain claim to respectability. And yet a little careful inspection will show in these more remote and subordinate and less worthy centres of thought, points of union between

themselves and the more authoritative and dominant ones to which reference has been made. As the earth's surface presents to us vast mountain ranges which, in their lateral expansion, embrace in organic unity with themselves the hills on either side, so humanity, sweeping down the ages and expanding over the earth, presents to us equivalent ranges of thought which assert a vital connection with all subordinate and remoter elevations here and there in the valleys on either hand.

This figure suggests another resemblance. As these mountain ranges had not a simultaneous origin, but came successively into being at different points in time as subterranean and Titanic forces decreed, and thus stand as "monumental piles which wizard Time hath raised to count his ages by;" so the towering ranges and schools of human thought, that have been working and forecasting the destiny of the race, have had a prolonged and laborious genesis, springing into dominant authority in successive eras, according as human minds have been stimulated and energized by fresh discoveries of truth, by bolder theories and more powerful motives.

But consider that these centres of thought, whether sovereign in their authority or of a less influential type, whether they had their origin in the flickering dawn of a gray antiquity, or are a recent outburst, all establish and illustrate the fact that human minds are so constituted that they must live in intelligent and sympathetic union one with another. Call these points of union by what term you please—centres of thought, or schools; conceive of human minds as convoked and crystallizing upon an idea, upon a principle—I care not. All I insist upon is the *fact*, taught by all history, that mankind are put under the necessity of living in sympathetic and social communion. The entire expanse of human history is dotted all over with these centres of clustered souls.

II. With this phenomenon of history before us, I will ask you to consider *in the second place, that human minds, according as they converge toward and are held to these centres, have never been able to rise above the intellectual and moral level of the ideas or principles that created them.* As in crystallizable material there is a pervasive

formative force determining every particle in the solution inevitably to some centre and holding it there by a bond which it cannot break, so there is a necessity laid upon the minds of men which determines them to centres, where they are held by a power as authoritative as the necessity that brought them together was absolute. Once at that centre by voluntary social affinity, and voluntarily abiding in it, there is no possibility of the individual mind's breaking away from or rising above its general intellectual and moral tone. Union here is dominion. This is not saying that minds are under the necessity of being at given centres, but that being at these centres, they are of necessity so affiliated with their formative spirit as to be under their control and plastic authority. The apostle would apply his rule here: To what centre ye yield yourselves servants to obey, its servants ye are to whom ye obey. I would not, however, be understood to mean that all minds attached to schools have been absorbed in them and held in an invincible bondage; but that in proportion to their absorption in and the strength of their adherence to them they have been so held and bound. It must be agreed that the world has been favored all along the ages with men whose minds, independent and original, affluent of thought, and bold in speculation, have accepted no existing schools without essential modifications. They have broken away from the old moorings, adventured into new fields of discovery, and created new centres. "To sentence a man of true genius," says an acute thinker, "to the drudgery of a school, is to put a race horse in a mill."

But the fact of the existence of such men, so far from militating against my position, only confirms it, since these men have so reorganized old ideas and advanced new ones, and compounded them, old and new, into new products, that they have created centres in which multitudes have been involved and put under dominion according to the general law which I have affirmed. That these centres of thought, or schools, or intellectual and moral nuclei—call them by what term you please—have asserted this authority, is easily illustrated by an appeal to history.

In the civil life of the world there has been a ceaseless fermentation, and nations have gradually settled into the compactness of political schools. Sometimes they have accepted the doctrine of a pure monarchy ; sometimes they have centred upon the divine right of kings; sometimes the democratic idea has been the organizing and constructive principle; sometimes, in the union of church and state, a religious creed has been the cohering force and bond of empire; sometimes the person of a military conqueror or chieftain has been the national core; but notice that whatever that rallying nucleus has been, this or that, the nation that has accepted it, and according to the measure of that acceptance, has never been able to rise above the level of its political and moral life. The nation has found its anchorage in its constructive idea and organizing centre.

The same law appears with equal prominence in the world of philosophical inquiry and speculation. The mere mention of certain names, such as Plato, Spinoza, Bacon, Kant, Locke, Coleridge, and Edwards, suggests philosophical schools to which dominion has been accorded. But consider that minds that have accepted the pure ideas of Plato, the pantheistic speculations of Spinoza, the inductive philosophy of Bacon, the sensuous philosophy of Locke or the spiritual philosophy of Coleridge, or that have yielded to the authority of these kingly spirits in their individual speculative systems, are minds that have been held by these masters in philosophy as by bands of steel, and, according to the strength of this mastery, they have never been able to vary from or rise above the level of the intellectual and moral life of the schools which these philosophers founded. These centres of thought have exerted influences over human souls powerful as gravitation among the planets. They have warped through them, and embraced them and ordained their careers, as by the force of destiny.

But as religion has been conceived to be of higher moment than politics or philosophy, so it is in the province of theological inquiry and speculation that we behold the most marked and characteristic exhibition of the power of this principle. Human minds have never elsewhere congregated in such numbers or with such spontaneity or

celerity, nor have they elsewhere crystallized with such compactness, as at the great centres of theological thought. Minds that have found their religious union in the teachings of Confucius, or in the doctrines of the Vedas, or in the instructions of the Koran, or in the Christian Scriptures, have been held at these points by motives derived from conscience and the world to come, and hence their unparalleled strength. But confining our eye to the activity of the human mind within the bounds of Christendom, we find a large number of powerful theological schools which have passed into history, carrying, like the philosophical ones, at their germinant centres, the names of their illustrious founders. And observe that minds in the Christian world which have united upon Augustinianism, upon Arminianism, upon Calvinism, or upon Edwardeanism, in short, upon this or that ecclesiastical polity, or theological creed, whether it be the dogma of Infallibility in the creed of the Catholic church, or the tenets of the Latter Day Saints—I repeat, minds that have congregated and crystallized at the great theological and ecclesiastical centres of the Christian world, have been bound into these centres like a gnarl in an oak, and held there by bonds as invincible as their loyalty and attachment have been unreserved and spontaneous. The Calvinist, so far as he is distinctively a Calvinist, has never been able to rise above his Calvinism, the Arminian above his Arminianism, the Mohammedan above his Mohammedanism, the Roman Catholic above his Catholicism, the Mormon above his Mormonism, the Spiritist above his Spiritism, and so on through all the schools and sects and parties into which Christendom has been divided.

With these illustrations before us, I am prepared to reaffirm the position that human minds, according as they have converged toward and have been held to these great centres, whether in the political, in the philosophical, or in the theological world, or in any other world of thought that can be named, have never been able to rise above the level of the ideas and principles which are there entertained. God has so created the souls of men, finite and dependent as to put them under the necessity of having centres, and each soul its supreme centre. The necessity here is the necessity of honey

bees when they swarm to have a point distinct from themselves, where they gather in a clustered mass of sonorous life.

III. We take an important step in advance, as we pass, to consider, thirdly, *that human minds, clustered at these great or these minor centres, have been satisfied and at rest only according as these centres have been replete with truth, and they have been unsatisfied and tumultuous in proportion as they have not been.* It needs to be remembered that the human spirit is so created in the image of God's intellectual and moral being, that whatever is false and spurious is utterly alien from, and inimical to its nature. Hence, whenever minds have congregated in unions wanting in truth, they have been unsatisfied, and restive and tumultuous; as they have found the place of their supposed rest to be an admixture of truth and error, error predominating, the bond of union has given way and disintegration has set in; as they have found it wholly false and deceptive, minds have revolted in prompt and angry disdain. Instead of gradual severance and separation, there has been, in the issue, explosion. As minds in their associations, in the varied forms we have considered, have been acting in harmony with that universal law in material nature known as *attraction;* so when they have committed themselves to centres that have been inadequate and spurious, they have acted in harmony with that other law of *repulsion* equally powerful in nature. Hence, human history is mainly taken up with giving accounts of the dissolutions of old centres and the formation of new ones in the political philosophical and religious world. As systems of government, and of philosophy, and of theology have been put to the test, tried by the standard of truth, and have been found wanting, they have been required to dissolve and give place to systems more in harmony with eternal verity.

Appeal to history might here be made, as before, in illustration of this position. The powers of the earth, in every department of human thought and inquiry, have been shaken from the first, as though there were a Governor among the nations, overturning and overturning, in the interests of Him whose right it is to reign. According as there has been enough of truth at the centres of the

great schools in government, in philosophy, and in religion, to continue them in being and advance them in excellence, they have withstood the shocks of time and still exist. Yet, as matter of fact, they have not remained undisturbed and tranquil. There have been subterranean rumblings and fermentation ; here and there, now and then, heavy revolts, and removals to other centres. The monarchical idea, in church or state, has never been a cohesive force of sufficient strength to hold its votaries steadily to it. They have trembled like iron filings on an exhausted magnet.

The multitudes have been kept in place often, not by power within, attracting, but by the constraints and compressure of outward appliances—the driving of hoops. When, under the yoke of tyrannical misrule, they have broken away from bondage thus created and maintained, and attached themselves to centres in which the democratic idea has been the organizing force, whether in church or state, there has been, to a great extent still, fermentation and restlessness. At other centres, less respectable than these, organization has been followed by gradual disintegration ; in some cases by instant disruption. As an instance of the former, take the wild adventure of all Europe in the crusades. Here, for the first time, we see Europe united in a single enterprise, and, for more than two centuries, intent upon one object. But what became, at length, of this unity? It dissolved into thin air, and is known only by the student of history as one of the exhibitions of human folly. As instances of the dissolution of centres by explosion, take any form of government in the history of the world up to date, that has so carried its severity beyond the point of bearing as to issue in *revolution*, like the French government under Louis XVI., or the English government under Charles I. ; or, take some of the spurious systems of reform, like the Socialistic adventure at New Harmony, Ind., under Robert Owen, which crumbled into offensive decay as rapidly as it came into being ; or the Mormon abomination in Utah, where explosive material has been accumulating for a day of vengeance that hastens apace ; or take any of the great financial monopolies, from the lofty "Credit Mobilier" down to the ring

swindles of Tammany fame. At all these tyrannical centres there have been revolutionary explosions; and they have been the more appalling and eviscerating, according as truth has been wanting and tyranny cruel.

Recall the steps we have taken:

Human minds must have their centres;

They can never rise above the level of these centres;

They have never been content and at rest at centres except as the same have been true and sufficient;

And since, in the main, they have not contained truth unmixed with error, and have often been positively false, therefore human minds in general have been restive and billowy, volcanic and explosive.

It is not difficult to show thus in general that the organic sequences of history have been those of decay and death. Deterioration has been the prevailing fact in language, in literature, in art, science, religion and civilization, except as supernatural influences have interposed to arrest the decline. No student of history will charge Professor Shedd with exaggeration when he says: "The slow and sure decay of national vigor and return to barbarism, the unvarying decline from public virtue to public voluptuousness; in short, the entire history of man, so far as he is outside of supernatural influences, and unaffected by the intervention of his Maker, though it be a self-determined and responsible process, is yet in every part and particle a strict evolution of man's evil nature impelling him on to the bitter and disastrous issue."

The original progenitors of the race were created in maturity. God himself was their immediate friend and guide. "But their descendants are born infantile—helpless as the dust, slow to learn, impatient of thought and study, refusing to profit by lessons of experience, and forever chasing phantoms of the imagination, and breaking over the restraints of government and law. If reason might to a greater extent guide the people, or self-love temper and moderate them in their pursuits, yet passion neutralizes the power of these restraints, and the people are driven headlong. Ambition, prejudice, lust,

false systems of education, corrupting associates, the venom of party-spirit, and the heat of vain and hasty engagements," everywhere come in for their share of service in the general decline and wreck. These have been attended by sceptical unbelief, scientific assault, bewildering sophistry, and the incongruities of history and philosophy. Meanwhile, the wearisomeness of business, the routine of official service, the uncertainty of events, the malice of enemies, the treachery of friends, the fret of disappointment, the painfulness of disease and the shortness of life, have increased the elements which have caused these endless tossings and surgings of earth's stormy sea of human life, as it has been sweeping across the longitudes and surging down the ages. New centres have been formed and dissolved. Revolution has succeeded revolution, states and empires have flourished, reached their limits and passed away. Magnificent cities are transformed into frightful heaps, and owls hoot and satyrs dance in the palaces of kings. These facts are the occasions of discouragement to many, to some of despair ; while the multitudes have surrendered to the winds of fortune, and been alternately faint or frantic, despondent or mad, ambitious or idle, according as times and moods have decreed.

Thus has come to pass the saying that is written, "The wicked are like the troubled sea when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt." Humanity has been kept in a state of perpetual fermentation, making the wildest traverses and the most reckless plunges. In this state of things what the world needed was a divine intervention.

> "Man, with all his posterity, must die;
> Die he, or justice must, unless for him
> Some other, able and as willing, pay
> The rigid satisfaction, death for death."

By its wisdom the world knew not God and never could know him. Self-deliverance was out of the question. Restoration must come, if at all, from an agency that is above nature, and that can arrest the course of nature—that can do more than expand ; that can regenerate and place upon a new foundation.

IV. This prepares me to direct your attention to The Centre

which God in Christianity has furnished for mankind. Amidst kingdoms faltering and going to decay, there was need of one that could not be moved; amidst centres inadequate and exhaustible, there was required one that could meet the nature and the exigency of human souls.

There must needs appear in the midst of an old and dying world a new and quickening power—a centre of life, around which all the energies that may chance to have survived the general wreck, and which itself may awaken, shall gather and unite—not a philosophy, but a revelation; not a creed, but a Person. "I looked," and the object of survey was the world lying in wickedness, eating of the fruit of its own ways and filled with its own devices—a troubled sea. "I looked, and there was none to help, and I wondered that there was none to uphold; therefore, mine own arm brought salvation." In only one instance is God represented in the Scriptures as driven to an emergency. For once he is engaged in a search. His knowledge, love and power were put under contribution. At length we hear the divine *eureka*, "I have found a ransom." In fulness of time an infant hung upon the bosom of a Jewish maid. Conceived by the Holy Ghost, He was born of the Virgin Mary, and suffered under Pontius Pilate. Entering upon His work, He came into conflict with man's arch-enemy and conquered him. He first bound the strong man of the house, and then entered upon the work of spoiling his goods. He remanded demons to their prison home, healed diseases and raised the dead. The forces of nature obeyed His mandates. He declared Himself to be the incarnation and manifestation of the Godhead; and, in the divine authority of His teachings, in the supernaturalness of His works, and in His fulfilment of the prophecies, He established the claim. Through types, shadows, symbols, God through the ages gave intimation of an approaching redemptive work. In Christ, their antitype and fulfilment, these shadows found their significance and glory. By the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, this Being of a double nature, whose name was Wonderful, of miraculous power, of tenderest sympathies, of largest beneficence, was taken and by wicked hands slain, voluntarily submitting to indig-

nity and suffering — the just for the unjust — a ransom for sin. Crucified, dead and buried, He could not be holden of the cords of death, but was declared to be the Son of God with power by His resurrection from the dead. When God thus set to His seal that Christ was, as He declared Himself to be, the Son of God, all nature united to signalize the event ; the heavens were darkened, the earth was convulsed, the veil of the temple was rent in twain, graves were opened and the dead arose and appeared unto many—a series of wonders which carry in them a solemn, miraculous and authoritative declaration of Almighty God that He who died on the cross was the world's Redeemer.

This now is the Centre which God, in His infinite compassion, furnished for mankind. It is not an intangible, cold abstraction of the schools ; not a system of philosophy ; it is more than a theological creed. God's Centre is a Person, and that Person is both His Son and the Son of Man. In his twofold nature He represents the Godhead on the one hand, and the human race, in its normal integrity, on the other. He embodied the wisdom of God and the power of God. He expressed the Divine love, compassion and sympathy. In Him was life and the life was the light of men. No man had seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, who dwelleth in the bosom of the Father, He declared Him. As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is our Beloved among the sons of men. So wise in speech was He, so tender in compassion, so amiable in character, so large in beneficence, so replete with every virtue that charms us into admiration and rapture, that we look upon Him as the very incarnation of universal loveliness. In Him no virtue jostled another out of place, none rose into extravagance, none pined in feeble restriction. In Him the *Desire* of all nations came. He met the longings expressed in the unconscious prophecies of heathenism. To Him her pagan altars, inscribed to the unknown God, pointed with singular directness. As altogether lovely, He was the delight of the sons of men. It was required of the Centre which God should furnish that it should be their attraction. "And I, if I be lifted up"—signifying what death he should die—"will draw all men unto Me." Hence

the force of representing Him under the figure of the stone of infinite magnetic attraction, cut out of the mountains without hands; a tried stone, elect, precious, chief-corner; a stone which is destined, in its unspeakably attractive power, so to draw men to it and upon it, as to fill, in due time, in its enlargement, the whole world. It is the old rock of the wilderness that followed Israel, and which quenched their thirst, which rock was Christ. It is the rock in which Israel triumphed. "Their rock is not as our rock, our enemies themselves being judges," but which Israel afterwards repudiated and made a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence.

Observe that this stone cut from the mountains is a *living* stone. The attractive Centre which God has established, is His Eternal Son, the Prince of Life; who, having life in Himself, diffuses and sustains life throughout the universe; who, as Redeemer and Mediator laid down His life; and having power to lay it down, took it again, rising from the dead death's conqueror, to die no more; and thus becoming the resurrection and the life to all who accept Him.

Mark the assimilative power of this Centre. "To whom, coming as unto a living stone, ye also as *living* stones are built up a spiritual house." From the first laying of this stone in Zion, out of the very stones of the desert, God has been raising up children unto Abraham; for they that are of faith are Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise. Imbedded in nature's quarry, sunk in the hole of the pit or scattered on the heath, these stones are drawn together upon the Divine Magnet by influences sweeter than the Pleiades, and bands mightier than Orion's. As stones living, instinct with the very life of the all-embracing Centre, and polished after the similitude of a palace, and gleaming with inward and reflected light, they congregate upon the foundation. Obeying the architectural instinct of the life that pulsates therefrom, they take their appropriate places in the structure, and are builded together, a living temple wherein God dwells, and which forever resounds His praise. Their relation to the Chief Corner is such that they are changed as by the Spirit of the Lord into the same image from glory to glory, until the house of God, thus created, which is the *ecclesia* of the living God, throughout

its entire extent, and to its utmost turret and pinnacle, glows and irradiates with the beauty of the Lord, the King of Glory.

And consider that this Stone laid in Zion is not only provided as the Centre of the Church; the Centre of the Church is the Centre for humanity, and the only Centre. This is as it should be, for there is nothing exclusive in the provisions of redemption. Christ died for all; the Holy Ghost is able to convert all; the conditions of salvation are practicable to all; the decrees of God are the same to all who will accept of salvation, and no man has a right not to be saved. Hence the force of the Divine invitation in the text: "Come unto me;" "I have been lifted up;" "Come all ye that labor and are heavy laden," ye who have sought in vain for relief and satisfaction at other centres —empty cisterns that can hold no water—"Come unto me and I will give you"—what elsewhere ye cannot find—"I will give you *rest*." "Come," ye poor and needy; "Come," ye desolate ones; "Come," ye hardy clans that shiver and freeze amidst the ices of the poles, and ye swarthy hordes that repose in the orange groves or pant on the shrubless sands of the tropics; "Come," ye rich men and nobles; "Come," ye wise men; ye masters in philosophy and science; "Come," ye arrogant rejectors of the facts of redemption—facts as good as any facts, supernaturally authenticated, and having an evidence incapable of refutation; "Come, ye," then, all men and all women; young men and maidens and youth, and—little children, forbid them not to come—*and I will give you* REST. Dig no longer above the mine and leave the vein untried. Ten thousand broken shafts tell where ye have vainly dug; ten thousand broken cisterns tell how your thirst has been vainly mocked."

It remains now that we put this Centre to the tests by which we have tried other centres and found them wanting. We have seen that human minds never rise above the intellectual and moral level of the centres upon which they congregate; and that they have been in bondage whenever this level has been so low as to leave them unsatisfied. But in this Centre which God has provided for mankind there is no lack of elevation. It is a high Centre; and all who are attracted to it feel the inspiration of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. When, in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the

Son of God, we shall all come unto a perfect man, we shall not have surpassed the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. All who come to this Centre will be satisfied with its intellectual and spiritual elevation.

Therefore, it is the Centre which can never be superseded in the progress of the race. It contains all that man needs or ever can need. Its radius sweeps a realm of infinite extent, and gathers in all possible good. "I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness." Therefore, there is no peril of disintegration or of explosion at this Centre. "Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner, a sure foundation; *he that believeth shall not make haste.*"

Gentlemen of the graduating class, the theme which has now engaged our attention, though not invested with the charms of novelty, is yet accounted by you, as it is by us all, one of the highest importance and of inexhaustible interest. You bear me witness that the method of treating the subject in hand has not been out of harmony with the spirit and style of your entire course of discipline in the college. You have never been encouraged to rest in the forms of knowledge, but incited to pass beyond the letter that kills to the spirit of truth that imparts life. We have sought to lead you into such clear apprehension of fundamental principles, as to put you in possession of the clue to all knowledge. We have encouraged in you the spirit of inquiry; to take nothing as true that did not commend itself to you as intrinsically reasonable. As you have advanced from one department of study to another, we have asked you to mark the interdependence and organic unity of all knowledge. You can account no truth as yours, in its fulness of life and power, save as you see its harmony with neighboring truths. I am not confident that we are justified in denominating one department of truth natural and another moral. It is difficult to conceive how a scholar, possessed of a genuinely scientific spirit, can be sceptical concerning truths that are as fundamentally lodged, and as consciously evolved in the intuitions of the soul as any truths brought to our knowledge through the organs of sense. What Nathaniel Hawthorne says of the Christian faith may be affirmed of truth itself: "It is a grand cathedral, with

divinely pictured windows. Standing without you see no glory, nor can you possibly imagine any; standing within, every ray of light reveals a harmony of unspeakable splendors." The exceeding privilege is accorded to the scholar to stand within this temple of truth and to have this vision. To you, gentlemen, standing on this vantage ground, and marking the divine harmony of all truth, I can commend with confidence Him whom we have considered in this discourse as the organizing and constructive Centre of humanity. The harmony you discover in all truth ought to prepare you to accept Him who is the unity of all men. "To know God, the Maker," says Carlyle; "to know the divine laws and inner harmonies of the universe, must always be the highest glory of a man." May this glory be yours in your knowledge of Him who is at once the wonder of the world and the solution of its mysteries.

Gentlemen, you have reached an interesting point in your lives. You have been advancing towards it together for the past four years in the sweet intimacies of college life. The ground you have traversed together, the scenes through which you have passed in all the relations and struggles of these years, will furnish for you a retrospect of never ending delight, notwithstanding you may discover particulars wherein you might have done better than you have. To one event alone, in the history of your class, can you point as having cast a signal gloom upon you. And that deepens as you approach the hour of your separation. You recall to-day, as we all do, with sorrowing hearts the absence of Leavenworth from your ranks. He is not with you to-day. We recall his manly form; his calm but vigorous thought; his modest but determined purpose; his Christian and noble character, and the high promise he gave of eminent usefulness in the world. But he is not, for God took him. Happy the tempests that cast their wrecks on the shores of Paradise. God sanctify to us our remembrances of him, and the heavy grief that weighs upon the hearts of a stricken home. But you cannot pause long to weep for your dead. The necessity is upon you to move forward to your work. Go forth in the strength of an honest purpose, armed with faith, and impelled by zeal tempered with wisdom; and may the God of peace go with you.